

Retired professors use artificial intelligence (AI) tools. Sharing best practices.

Co-chairs – Introduction to the session

[Jože Gričar, Professor Emeritus](#), University of Maribor, Joze.Gricar@UM.si

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Speaker 1 – Sharing best practices for the age of generative AI

Daniel J. Anderson, andersd@elon.edu, Special Assistant to the President, Elon University, North Carolina USA

Lead author, [Student Guide to Artificial Intelligence](#) series

Daniel J. Anderson is the **Special Assistant to the President** at [Elon University](#), North Carolina, USA. He serves as the lead author of the widely accessed [Student Guide to Artificial Intelligence](#) series.

****Key questions:** might retired professors use this same guide? What would you emphasize in a guide for retired professors?

The publication series—which grew from a 2023 global collaboration—was developed to help students, educators, and institutions worldwide safely and effectively navigate higher education in the age of generative AI. The initiative is a partnership between [Elon University's Imagining the Digital Future Center](#) and the [American Association of Colleges and Universities \(AAC&U\)](#).

While early editions emphasized AI literacy, the 2026 edition shifts focus to building "human capabilities" that AI cannot replace. The materials are publicly available and downloaded by universities and colleges across the globe.

Speaker 2 – Intersections between digital communication and aging

[Mireia Fernández-Ardèvol](#), mfernandezar@uoc.edu, Full professor on digital communication and Excel·lència Acadèmia professor (AGAUR, 2026-2031), [Universitat Oberta de Catalunya](#). Mireia Fernández-Ardèvol focuses on digital communication as a gateway to studying social peripheries. She analyzes groups that, whether voluntarily or involuntarily, are excluded from hyper-digitalized society due to a lack of representation or resources. In this context, the analysis of socio-digital inequalities constitutes one of the main pillars of her research activity.

Her interests also include a critical examination of hyper-datafication and digital methodologies. She reflects on the potential and limitations of quantitative methods associated with big data, as well as on the new peripheries these methods may generate, reinforce, or eliminate.

Furthermore, she has developed a significant international research agenda focused on the intersection between digital communication and aging. She studies specific forms of ageism, such as digital ageism and data-driven ageism. Her work aligns with the principles of the 2030 Agenda, particularly with the commitment to “leave no one behind.”

****Key questions:** What forms of digital ageism should retired professors expect? What are best practices to counter digital ageism?

She chairs the temporary working group on Aging & Communication studies within ECREA (European Communication Research and Education Association). Her academic output demonstrates a strong commitment to interdisciplinary approaches. With an initial training grounded in positivist and quantitative traditions—specifically in econometrics and applied economics—she has incorporated critical and qualitative perspectives through various research projects, always prioritizing the relevance of research questions over specific methodological tools. She combines her academic research with knowledge transfer projects that inform public policy in the Catalan context.

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Fernández-Ardèvol, M., & Taipale, S. (2025). **Mobile communication and later life: From theories to empirical frescoes** [Editorial - Special Issue]. *Mobile Media & Communication* 14(1), 3-11 [Open Access] <https://doi.org/10.1177/20501579251398570>

Fernández-Ardèvol, M., Suárez-Gonzalo, S., & Karadkar, U. (2026). **Older adults' perception of digital surveillance by civil society organisations: disappointment and protective practices.** *Journal of Global Ageing* (Open Access) <https://doi.org/10.1332/29767202Y2025D000000041>

Gallistl, V., Fernández-Ardèvol, M., Suárez-Gonzalo, S., & Peine, A. (2025). **Privacy apathy in later life? Online surveillance perception and privacy protection among older internet users.** *Journal of Global Ageing* (online first) [Open Access]. <https://doi.org/10.1332/29767202Y2025D000000040>

Loos, E., Fernández-Ardèvol, M., et al. (2025). **Making sense of older adults' everyday smartphone use for social connectedness.** *Journal of Global Ageing* (online first). <https://doi.org/10.1332/29767202Y2025D000000021>

Fernández-Ardèvol, M.; Rosales, A.; Oliván, R. (2025): **‘–What time is it? –Twenty years past two.’ The role of utilitarian and playful engagement in robot**

appropriation in later life. *Archives of Gerontology and Geriatrics Plus*, 2(1): 100119. [Open Access] <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.aggp.2025.100119>

Estanyol, E., Fernández-Ardèvol, M., et al. (2025). **Perception and use of generative AI among corporate communication students in higher education: adjusting expectations.** *Cuadernos.Info*, (62). <https://doi.org/10.7764/cdi.62.89632>

Fernández-Ardèvol, M., & Grenier, L. (2024). **Exploring data ageism: What good data can('t) tell us about the digital practices of older people?** *New Media & Society*, 26(8), 4611-4628. [Open Access] <https://doi.org/10.1177/14614448221127261>

Speaker 3 – Decision making with autonomous agents

Maria Gini, gini@umn.edu, is a Distinguished Professor of Computer Science and Engineering at the [University of Minnesota](#), USA. She specializes in artificial intelligence, swarm robotics, and multi-agent system decision-making. Her celebrated research has earned her major honors like the [AAAS Fellow](#), the Presidential Award for Excellence in Science, Mathematics and Engineering Mentoring, and the [ACM/SIGAI Autonomous Agents Research Award](#).

****Key questions:** What are best practices for working with autonomous agents? How will robots affect retired professors?

Her pioneering work spans broad applications, from search-and-rescue team operations to crowd navigation and task allocation. You can explore her extensive publication record and research impact through her [Google Scholar](#) profile.

Speaker 4 – Navigating retiree concerns about generative AI

Richard Welke, RWelke@RWelke.com, is a Regents Professor Emeritus of Computer Information Systems at [Georgia State University](#) in Atlanta, Georgia, USA. With an extensive research background in IT-enabled business process management and service-oriented enterprise innovation, his academic work and professional profile can be explored further through his [LinkedIn Profile](#) or [ResearchGate Profile](#).

****Key questions:** What are best practices for working with communities of retirees? How might retired professors assist with encouraging others to understand and use generative AI?

Speaker 5 – Online communities for retired professors

Laura J. Gurak, gurakl@umn.edu, is Professor Emerita of Rhetoric and Writing Studies at the [University of Minnesota](#), USA. A pioneer in Internet studies, her research focuses on the rhetoric of technology, online social action, and digital credibility. She is also a widely published author and co-author of several textbooks, including *Technical Communication*. Dr. Gurak is the author of two acclaimed books published by [Yale University Press](#) focusing on online communities and digital communication, and has authored or co-authored five technical communication textbooks for [Pearson](#).

****Key questions:** How does the rhetoric of generative AI influence use of these tools? What online communities might best assist retired professors and their use of AI?

Speaker 6 – Response to these best practices – based on research on the use of AI by older adults

Wendy A. Rogers, wendyr@illinois.edu, is the Shahid and Ann Carlson Khan Professor of Applied Health Sciences at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign. Her research focuses on human-centered technology design to support the autonomy, health, and aging-in-place of older adults and individuals with disabilities. She directs multiple initiatives on campus, including the Human Factors and Aging Laboratory, the McKechnie Family LIFE Home, and CHART (Collaborations in Health, Aging, Research, & Technology). Dr. Rogers explores the integration of technologies such as robotics, smart homes, and wearables to benefit physical, cognitive, and emotional health. Her work combines kinesiology, educational psychology, and technology systems.

Co-chairs – Thanks and acknowledgements

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